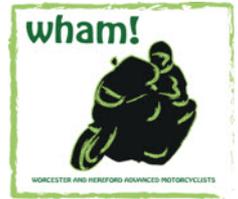




# WHAM! NEWS

March 2011



**Looking towards the majestic peaks of Kunzum.  
Derek's Himalayan adventure continues.**

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## Contents

2. Chairman's Notes
3. Notices
4. Book now for Special Future Events / Website programme
- 5/6. Brian Morgan's Biking Bio / March Club Night
- 7/9. Himalayan Adventure Episode 6
9. Shocking Secret of Sunday Rides
10. Report on February Quiz Night
11. Left side versus Right side
12. Observer Training Day / For Sale

[www.wham-motorcycling.org](http://www.wham-motorcycling.org)

Worcester and Hereford Advanced Motorcyclists.

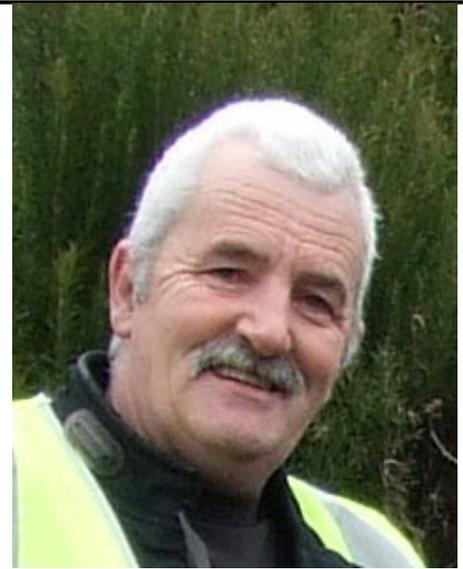
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## Chairman's Notes

Now, I'm not going to try and 'teach granny to suck eggs' as they say, but – having used my bike a few times over the winter and picked up some of that terrible salt/molasses mixture they put on the road, I have been careful to thoroughly wash the bike each time. I thought I'd done a fair job of it and proudly parked up in the garage ready for next time. What happened was – I went to move the bike a couple of weeks back and the rear brake appeared to have partially seized. No problem thinks I – a bit of brake cleaner, a toothbrush and a bit of elbow grease and I'm away to go. -- It didn't happen! I ended up having to strip the calliper off and dismantle it to clean it all properly. As it happens, it was just as well because I found a large 'dollop' of the offending salt mixture had settled in for winter in a spot, that's very difficult to see, on the alloy bracket that holds the calliper and it was even lodged between the calliper and the pads. Albeit, this wasn't the entire cause of the problem, it was quite happily lurching on my bike and would no doubt have caused some damage if left. So, the point being – It pays to make sure that any 'hard to reach' areas are properly cleaned but I would go a bit further and suggest that brake callipers and the like are removed / dismantled at least annually (by someone who knows what they're doing) to make sure. It could well save you a lot of money in the long run.



Some of you will be aware that we've had to postpone some of the intended spring outings owing to the fact that we were getting a bit overloaded. Between observer training, skills days, first aid training and a number of associates to get ready for test, there is simply too much to do. Having said that – apart from the much needed helpers we get at these events, it is mainly the observers and the committee that are involved. So, it occurred to me that there may well be a number of other members who might like to get involved with an outing or two and why should they miss out just because the observers are committed. If anyone at all is interested in going on a long ride/ weekend ride/ a trip to a specific event or venue – either as part of a group or possible even organising such a ride you are welcome to make use of the newsletter. Albeit any such outing would not form part of WHAM's programme there is nothing to prevent you from using this newsletter to drum up some support from amongst a large group of 'like minded' people. If anyone is interested then please don't hesitate to let John Hodges or me know. If you're not sure how to proceed then, again, send us a quick e-mail and we'll help you. It's your newsletter – please use it.

Also, we are now including a "For sale" section in the newsletter but this is obviously restricted to motorcycle related items. So, if you've got something to sell then please let John Hodges know. Please restrict it to no more than 3 items. "For sale items" will be repeated for 3 editions of the Newsletter. It'll cost you nothing and a lot of people will see it.

Finally – the sun came out today – and spring appears to have sprung – it's getting warmer (slowly) – so there's absolutely no good reason now for not turning out for the odd Sunday ride. It would be great to see as many as possible turn up and support those who've worked so hard to keep the group going (and I'd be happy too). See you soon and keep smiling.

Brian

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### New Chief Observer

As you will be aware, Tim Hutt recently stood down as our Chief Observer owing to the fact that he has moved to live in the outskirts of our area. As a result, the committee asked Derek McMullan if he would be prepared to take on the role. I am delighted to inform you that Derek has agreed to take on this very demanding position and is, unsurprisingly, already busy organising the various training activities we undertake. Derek's vast experiences as a motorcyclist, as an observer and as a founding member of the group, make him an excellent choice to take the training section of the group forward.

I should point out that the Chief Observer is appointed by the committee as opposed to being a member of the committee. Therefore, as a non-executive director of the IAM, Derek will take no part in any voting decisions regarding the running of the group.

Brian



## Thanks!

As you all know I stepped down as Chairman of WHAM! this year. At the AGM I was presented with a superb caricature showing me riding my beloved HP2 with the Himalayas in the background, Sylvia shouting orders at me, bicycles and the local wildlife scattering in all directions as I approach.

It is a wonderful memento which has already claimed pride-of-place in my study.



It has been a privilege and a pleasure to work with so many willing and able volunteers who have made WHAM! both a sociable Motorcycle Club and a high-quality Motorcycle training initiative for Hereford and Worcester Shires.

Thank-you all!

Derek



### MANY CONGRATULATIONS TO:



*John Burbeck who passed his IAM Advanced Motorcycle test on 12 February. His observer was Angus McLeod.*



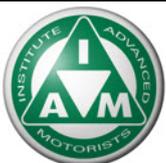
*Robin Smith (on the right) who passed his IAM Advanced Motorcycle test on 26 February. His observer was Eric Reynolds.*

A very nice "Thank you" letter has been received from the Manx GP Supporters Club for the kind donation of £100 that they received from Paul Judge and wham! in support of their "GP Rescue Helicopter Fund." Paul Judge gave us a talk last year on competing on the IOM and donated his expenses to the Manx AA. We also had a collection on the evening, and with the collection and his expenses Paul rounded it up to £100.

### NEW ASSOCIATE MEMBER

A very warm welcome to the following new associate member:

**Garry Price from Worcester**



## SPECIAL FUTURE EVENTS - BOOK NOW!

### **Northumberland Weekend Trip in September.**

'Steve Dalloway & Tony Davis are organising a long weekend away riding some of the excellent roads in Northumberland. The trip will run from Friday 9th September to Monday 12th September. The itinerary will be as follows:

Friday 9th – Ride up to hotel on 'interesting' roads – as little motorway as possible.

Sat 10th / Sun 11th – Ride some of the excellent roads around Northumberland, Cumbria & the Borders.

Monday 12th – Return to the Midlands via more entertaining roads.

Steve knows the roads in this area very well and you can rest assured that there will be some great routes. The weekend is open to all full members of WHAM and pillions are very welcome.

We have a few venues in mind for accommodation but need to have some idea of numbers before we book so please let Tony know if you are interested – [tonyzr@hotmail.com](mailto:tonyzr@hotmail.com)

### **BMF Rally Visit Saturday 14th May**

Richard Smith is organising a day trip to the BMF Rally. Meet at McDonalds in Worcester for an 8:00 am start. Ticket prices for BMF members are £12 in advance, £15 on the gate, for non-members it's £14 in advance and £17 on the gate (book your own tickets). Route details to Peterborough to follow. Please let Richard know if you are interested - [smudge@businessasusual.orangehome.co.uk](mailto:smudge@businessasusual.orangehome.co.uk)

**WHAM! WEBSITE: PLEASE REMEMBER TO CHECK THE "PROGRAMME" PAGE ON THE WHAM! WEBSITE. THIS IS REGULARLY UPDATED WITH ALL THE RIDES, NATTER NIGHTS, WEEKEND TOURS AND OTHER EVENTS THAT MIGHT BE OF INTEREST TO ALL MEMBERS.**

**It might be an idea to make the "Programme" page one of your "Favourites" rather than the "Home Page" which is primarily designed for visitors.**

### RIDER SKILLS DAYS (RSDs) AT HEREFORD AND WORCESTER

17 April for the Hereford Rider Skills Day at Sutton St Nicholas.  
8 May for the Worcester Rider Skills Day at Worcester RFC ground.

**We need helpers!!**

Contact [John Hodges](#) and [Steve Edwards](#) for the Hereford RSD and  
[Lynton Jaynes](#) and [Roger Brooks](#) for the Worcester RSD.

Please help if you can.



## Our Chairman, Brian Morgan – His Biking Biography

by John Hodges

I had the onerous task of “coaching” Brian Morgan, our new chairman, for the IAM Advanced Motorcycle test. This consisted of me following him whilst he gave me a superb “demo” ride. Shortly after, he took his test and passed!! I was then involved with his “Observer Training” – but that didn’t take long either. As a retired “Grade 1 Police Motorcyclist” Brian could easily have joined WHAM! without bothering to take the IAM test at all but being the sort of man he is, he chose to do it. Because of his background I thought it would be a good idea if all members had an insight into his “Biking Biography” and what follows is what I’ve managed to find out.

As a teenager, Brian started on a Vespa scooter and then, in 1976, moved onto a Honda CB200 (on ‘L’ plates in those days). He then passed his bike test before joining the police in 1979. In 1980 he attended the police “Standard Car Course” before moving to “Traffic” in 1982. He then attended the following courses:

Advanced car course – resulting in a Grade 1

Standard bike course – Grade 3

Advanced bike course – Grade 1

These were followed by VIP car courses which provided close protection to the “high and mighty” on the one hand but also dealt with ‘category ‘A’ prisoners’ ie the very dangerous type, on the other.

For relaxation, he continued to enjoy his motorcycling as well as doing some work for 'Star Rider', training riders up for the CBT and the DSA test.

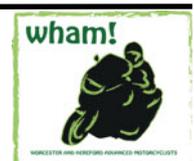
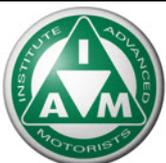


After this, he undertook the VIP motorcycle instructors’ course. This was devised to train 6 or 7 bikes to provide a rolling escort to a VIP convoy. Because of the Irish terrorist threat, it was vital that the convoy, and particularly “the bubble” in which the VIP was being escorted, did not stop – at all. The benefits of using bikes, apart from the massive cost saving over having dozens of officers on ‘points’, was that there were less people who knew what was happening and hence security was enhanced. The subsequent training of VIP motorcyclists involved using Grade 1 riders only and getting them to work as a team. Owing to the inherent dangers associated with motorcycles there was no room

for any error. Each rider had to be able to think and work independently but still form part of a close team and include several other fast moving objects in all his decisions. It worked, although not all Grade 1 riders got through selection owing to the ‘team’ element involved. The bikes used were mainly Norton Commandors (liquid cooled rotary engines) with one or two BMW K100’s followed by K1100’s.

During his time in the police Brian became involved in just about every type of incident you can think of but he was at his happiest on two wheels (even in a car sometimes!) and particularly when he was involved with a team. He found it very rewarding to work with a group of bikes that operated in complete unison with little or no fuss. During his time he went through 2 air cooled Nortons (Interpol 2), 2 liquid cooled Nortons (Commander), a BMW K100, and a couple of K1100’s.

He assures me that there are many people within WHAM who would have absolutely no trouble in successfully completing any one of the courses he’s mentioned.



As far as his own motorcycles were concerned, he progressed from a CB200 to a Honda 250 'Super Dream' before buying the bike he'd always wanted, namely a Honda CB750 (four). He kept that for some time but it was eventually replaced by a Yamaha FJ1200 and then an early Honda Blackbird.

Whilst all this was going on he also got his Class 1 HGV licence. He's been in and around HGV's since childhood and HGV driving was an itch that he had to scratch. By this time, Brian had met his wife, Ann, who already had a Class 1 HGV licence so he had yet another incentive!

Brian left the Police in 2003 and took up long distance driving in a variety of articles, much of which also involved Ann and him 'double crewing' to get the most mileage possible out of each day. They had some interesting times together and spent much time carrying plant equipment around the country but the best had to be £200,000 worth of combine harvester (its value really focuses the mind). After 5 years of "trucking" they decided to get some sort of home life so they both got their first ever day jobs (9-5, meal breaks, home at night and everything!). The only downside is that Brian now works for VOSA and they would frown on him having anything to do with commercial HGV driving so he doesn't get the chance to pilot 44 tonners anymore.



He now has a Honda XL650 Transalp for commuting and a Honda ST1300 Pan-European but says that, although he finds the Pan smooth and comfortable, he actually finds the Transalp more fun. However, Ann is now using it and preparing for the IAM SFL herself so he now has to find chances to sneak it away from her whenever he can. He also has access to a 1500 Gold Wing trike which his father-in-law owns. Apparently it's more fun than we might think.

Because of the haphazard nature of his various jobs Brian has never been in a position to have much of a social life. So, as soon as he was able, he went and joined his local motorcycle club. Unfortunately, he was a bit concerned with the standard of some of the riding he saw so he decided to apply for membership of an IAM group. We are very lucky in that he chose WHAM!. His next 'issue' was that he'd been away from advanced riding for a few years and couldn't be sure what might have changed or if he still had the ability. Another concern was that he didn't want to breeze in and put anyone's nose out of joint and that was the reason he decided to join as a normal member and undertake the IAM test. I think we can all testify that he certainly hasn't put anyone's nose out of joint. More than that, we are delighted that he was happy to undertake the duties of Vice-Chairman throughout 2010 before being voted in as Chairman at the 2011 AGM. I think we can all look forward to the continuing success of WHAM! under his Chairmanship.

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## MARCH NATTER NIGHT - KEEP YOUR HEARING



**We have invited "Custom Ear Protection" to come and talk to us for the March Natter Night on Wednesday 30th March. They will be giving a talk about the importance of ear protection for bikers and you will get the opportunity, there and then, to have your own ear plugs measured - and then they'll be sent to you when made up. Riding without ear protection can cause irreparable damage and it**



**is strongly recommended that you try and attend this session because, even if you don't buy any "custom made earplugs" you will at least be more informed about the whole subject of ear protection. Please support this event. We really look forward to seeing you there.**

**Falcon Hotel 7.30 for 8.00 pm.**



**Himalayas (7) – August/September 2010***by Derek McMullan*

Leaving Rangrik was full of mixed emotions. I knew I was facing the high mountain passes of Kunzum and Barralacha but at the same time I knew I had turned a corner towards the end of the trip. It was to be one of the most demanding days of the trip; 0530 breakfast! After packing and briefing we were out on the road by 0700 with 180km to do before we reached Keylong. Just over a hundred miles might sound a doddle in the context of English roads but the Himalayas have a few tricks up their massive sleeve.

The morning's briefing laid unneeded emphasis on the length of the day, the challenging nature of the climbs, the descents, the water crossings, the altitude, life, the universe and everything!

As we left the hotel and were just settling in" on the bikes we were greeted by a stark roadside message which in two words summarised what our guides had spent a full 15 minutes of ride time explaining!



This area is still staunchly Buddhist and there are occasional reminders of that on the road. We're are now right out in the middle of nowhere and the single track roads are lightly used by local 4x4s and the TATA trucks, so why do we need roundabouts? It's a Buddhist thing; roadside temples are erected and because it is good Karma to pass to the left of these edifices in time it becomes a roundabout – one entrance; one exit!

Climbing out of the river valleys becomes a set-piece: we know we will have a hairpin section and being the Himalayas we know it will be a big one! Then we expect a long mountainside traverse to the next hairpin section and so on for several thousand metres of climb and descent. Spiti had saved a surprise for us – yes we had the hairpins... traverse... hairpins...traverse but then it opened out into the most dramatic high level plateau where we were able to assemble the whole group in a line for this photo which is now wrapped around my coffee mug. We are at around 4000m and the peaks in the background ascend to 6700m:

This plateau was only a few hundred meters below the Kunzum pass but it was not a straightforward ascent; there were many more ups and downs before we emerged at Kunzum.



At a roadside chai stop we met a Buddhist traveller who had walked over the mountains out of Tibet to escape the Chinese. She was heading for Tabo with nothing more than her baby and a picture of the Dali Lama on her back; and sometimes we think life is tough!



The variability of the road surface continued to cause “excitement”. The abruptness with which billiard-smooth tarmac gives way to loose stones is extraordinary. We often hear in our training that it is never one thing which causes the accident but the amalgamation of a few hazards which conspire to catch those not fully engaged. Take a look at this little section of road and just imagine barrelling along on a nice (tarmac) descent on your 1950’s Enfield with crap brakes. My first thought was quickly dispensed: “No need to brake here I can see the tarmac re-starts in 200 m”, and so onto the loose surface with an uneasy feeling in the pit of my stomach because I’d just clocked the road-sign by the side of the continuation tarmac. 10 m further on and I was moving up from uneasy to queasy – unfolding before me was a sharp left-right-left set of bends hidden by the mountain side and the road falling away. I needed to go hard left on a downhill grade, loose surface or take Evel Knievel’s route straight across the river valley. Even on a downhill section the Enfield’s acceleration is not up to the aerial route so I needed, quickly, to lose some speed to reliably make the corner. Fortunately the rear brake was on duty and my lame manual anti-lock braking managed to shimmy the Enfield down to a realistic rate and settle my stomach faster than anything the medics were handing out to some of our less fortunate bikers.



The climb out of the valley started at a desolate glacier-melt bridge. To give you a feel for the scale look carefully and you'll see a couple of bikes just emerging from the bridge on the far side. As you can see we were criss-crossing this particular mountain for quite some time before emerging again onto the high-plateau where we could recover from the effort of turning the bike through endless hairpins and take in the majestic peaks of Kunzum (see front page) we were heading towards.



*(Continued next month.)*



## SHOCKING SECRETS OF SUNDAY RIDES EXPOSED

**This shocking picture reveals the true reason why some wham! riders go out on Sundays even though the weather is foul, the roads are wet and greasy, the mud is everywhere and the hills are covered in mist. They will certainly have to spend hours cleaning their bikes when they get home - but at least they will have enjoyed a really good breakfast!!**

**So, if you haven't done it yet - isn't it time you joined us for a Sunday Ride - especially now the weather is improving. Every week from Worcester and the first Sunday of the month (sometimes more) from Hereford. Or just meet at the destination cafe. Details are on the website programme.**

**(Also see website for policy on restrictions for Associate Members.)**



## The February Natter Night Quiz

by *Brian Morgan*



*The Quiz Master*

Picture the scene – WHAM members chomping at the bit, eager to engage in a battle of honour (there had to be honour – there weren't any prizes), waiting to pit themselves against each other to find out which team had the most encyclopaedic knowledge of motorcycling trivia (and stuff). I think some took it a little too seriously though. Derek used one hand to shield his answers from the opposition and they were at least 10 feet away and had no chance of seeing his page, let alone what was written on it! Steve Edwards got so excited I could see the veins in his forehead throbbing. Lynton tried to use an i-phone to get on t'internet but I caught him. Tony Davis tried to use his phone to take pictures of my question/answer sheet but he's never going to be quick enough. Barb tried to put me off by complaining about me walking about on the stage but I wasn't scared. Andy Peckston tried various distraction techniques, mainly heckling, (he was just being krafty), but that didn't work either. Ian Barnard had me worried for a while because he was uncharacteristically quiet, but I now think it was because he was concentrating (on eating chips). I was just a bit relieved that John Hodges couldn't make it – now he is trouble looking for somewhere to happen and, if he'd turned up, we'd still be there.

The teams ( I use the word loosely) – well – there were three all told.

1. *"The team with no name"* (a sensible group – not exactly young but not exactly old)
2. *"The Sheep"* (yep – another dig but I'll get revenge – these were the youths mainly – apart from Den who was a stabilising influence and clearly the most intelligent).
3. *"The Deaf Gits"* who can't spell, read or write (accurately named with a collective age that was biblical).

It all started amicably enough and once I'd dealt with the heckling we got into our stride and what followed was a closely fought contest between the teams. Apart from the fact that I had to constantly repeat the questions to Guy Jenkins it went quite smoothly and I was amazed at the amount of rubbish some people keep in their heads. I find nowadays that, when some new information pushes its way into the front of my brain then some old stuff sort of falls off the back. These guys though have managed to retain an immense amount of information that is never going to be of any use really – except in a quiz I suppose.

The evening ended with a clear victory for the Sheep who managed a credible 41 points. Apparently the default answer for any question you're unsure about is – 1935! (In all honesty though, they managed just 6 points – it was Den who scored the rest). The sensible team with no name got 37 points and the deaf gits got 26 (in their defence, they might have forgotten why they walked into the room and got confused). In all honesty, if I'd been trying to answer these questions, my score would have been in single figures so all due respect must go to all who took part.

There was a very polite applause at the end but, being somewhat new to this, I wasn't at all sure how well I was doing. The only thing I can say though is that I enjoyed the evening – once again in the company of so many people whose company I will always welcome. Thank you all for turning out and I look forward to seeing you all again soon. Keep smiling.

**Tony Reusser receives his IAM Certificate from our Chairman, Brian Morgan at the February Natter Night.**



**Left side v right side** (or how to balance your biking)

by Ant Clerici

Biking is the art of balance: lean angle v grip, braking v acceleration, caution v adrenalin... So with that in mind I want to get in touch with the “other” side of your brain - the listening, caring, togetherness side of your biking. I know this will be a challenge, but please bear with me for the next few paragraphs.

Biking is about power and macho skill; its being out “with your mates”, talking about the power delivery, gear box ratios, the toys we have and those we desire. It’s about pride. On the road it’s showing off good technique, making progress and inevitably being competitive.

So maybe there’s a fear of failure too?

Fail to keep up, fail to ride the optimum line, fail to overtake as soon as you can, fail to see the obvious...so as I continue to gain experience of our chosen “craft” I find myself wanting to recognise when the “fear of failure” looms up and changes my riding:

- Am I taking more risks?
- Is my riding less smooth?
- Have I missed seeing something important?
- Should I have predicted that the.....?
- Am I getting more dangerous? (To myself and others)

So back to a me few years ago – why go through an Advanced test? Why continue with Observing? Well, I recognised it was THE way to keep me as safe as possible.

It came at a price – to have other bikers criticise me; question what the \*\*\*\* was I doing on that bend, didn’t I see the horse (obviously not!)...etc

I changed; I improved.....

And this hasn’t stopped because I have the certificates.

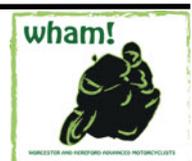
**I still don’t want my fellow bikers to question/criticise me because its hard to hear them;** the macho side of my brain tries to stop the listening...I know I should but it’s too easy to bounce the comment back and ignore the well intentioned observation...I should listen because it will save me sometime in the future....

Recently we had a fabulous ride to Crossgates with challenging road surfaces and on the mountains some low cloud. On the road from Crossgates I was last in a small group; we turned onto a B road – twisty, muddy, poorly surfaced in places and for once I found myself having to try to keep up. And I did; but then found myself thinking...what was I doing? The others were getting strung out so the pace was quick – not an issue - but I felt my tyres hadn’t warmed up, and the roads weren’t sympathetic to 150bhp. (You see how easy it is to make excuses) My cornering became ragged and I was accelerating on bumpy straights to catch up. But, hey I was only 5 seconds behind...I had to get closer...NO NO NO! My focus was on keeping up and not riding...so I backed off and 5 minutes later at the turn onto the A44 I found myself back with the group who weren’t so far ahead after all.

So listen to yourself – it’s what Advance training gives you – a sensible voice in your head. To ride for yourself with the skills you have...ride for the moment...

Listen to others when they criticise or comment on your riding because they’re doing it because they care – for example – ‘you’re going into bends too fast’ or ‘I thought that overtake was dodgy because I’m sure you couldn’t see the whole road ahead’... but also the compliments... ‘you timed that roundabout perfectly’, ‘the overtake after the bridge looked so smooth....’ take time to discuss the issues.

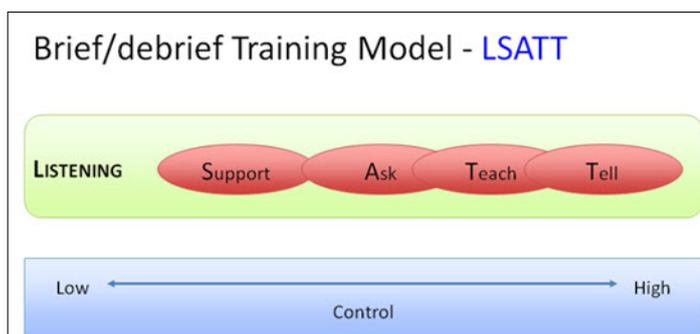
So talk about your biking and be man enough to listen...be good enough to do something about it...



## WHAM! OBSERVER TRAINING DAY - SATURDAY 5 MARCH 2011



Derek McMullan, our new Chief Observer, assisted by John Nixon, organised an excellent "WHAM! Observer Training Day" to get us all focused again as the biking season approaches. The emphasis for the day was on the importance of good "communication". John gave a fascinating insight to "communication techniques" and used the SLATT model below.



John, riding a 1954 Straighback, fabric seat, no hands required chair then followed Derek, who raced away on his knee stool. John then pulled him over and demonstrated "SLATT" and its relationship with "Control". We then all went out to practice our communicating abilities, firstly with a dotty artist who spent more time looking at the country side than the road, and in the afternoon with a "Know it all" Expert. A stimulating and challenging day during which all observers learnt a lot.

### FOR SALE

Del Britton has a nearly new topbox for sale - he's bought a BMW RT which already has one. The Kappa 35l top box cost £75 and comes complete with a universal fitting plate. It is tough, strong and built to last - and is yours for £45.



- 35ltr capacity    · Waterproof polypropylene    · Anti-scratch surface
- Built in reflector    · Storage for a single helmet
- Automatic opening/closing system    · Black

**Dimensions:** Width 49cm, Height 33cm, Depth 41.5cm

Click here to email [Del](#).

